

**Save Ellis Island**  
**Lesson Plans**  
*Immigrants at Ellis Island*  
**Grades 8 to 12**

***Simulation: The Process of Passing through Ellis Island***



**Objectives:**

- Students will be able:
  - to understand the basic steps in the inspection process of immigrants at Ellis Island.
  - to explain how the screening process of immigrants is linked to the expectations of discipline and cooperation in the American industrial workforce.
  - to empathize with the immigrant experience at Ellis Island.

**Materials:** (items are attached in the packet)

- Ship Manifest
- Chalk Marks
- Role Play Cards
- Inspector Questionnaire
- Mental Examination Tests
- Inspection tags

**1-2 days prior to simulation:**

**Preparation:** Ask students to prepare a list of items that they would bring with them if they were to migrate to another country for a long period of time. Review this list with the students for appropriateness. *Why would you bring these items with you? What do the items that are brought suggest about the immigrant's thoughts on the life they are leaving? What does it suggest about what they thought their new life will be like in America?*

Explain to students that they will be taking on the role of an individual in the immigration process: an immigrant, inspector, Public Health Service Doctor or guard at Ellis Island and participating in a simulation of what it was like for immigrants coming through Ellis Island.

Remind the students that they will be adopting a character and acting and that this is meant to be a simulation, as best as possible, of the inspection process that steerage class immigrants went through on Ellis Island.

Inspectors: Instruct students who will be playing the role of inspectors that they will be asking the immigrants questions and checking that the answers match the completed ship manifest. (Note: If you create more “immigrants” than those listed, update the manifest by filling in the columns with the information you make up for the role playing cards for these immigrants.) Explain that the manifest was completed by the shipping company prior to boarding with the answers that the immigrants gave them.

Provide those students with the Inspectors’ Questions. Review with them what would cause them to turn down an immigrant for admission to America. If your class includes bi-lingual students, select several to serve as inspectors and have them translate the questions from English to their native tongue so the student “immigrants” will be faced with questions they cannot fully understand/reply to.

Immigrants: Hand out the Immigrant Role Play Cards containing details about the place of origin and the background of the immigrant, who they will portray, which will provide them with the answers to the questions the inspectors will ask. (Some of them will be underage, anarchists or have an illness in their families which might pose a risk to their admittance.)

Explain that they should bring items that that person might have brought with them to the USA, or a close equivalent of the items - in a paper grocery bag – the amount they bring is limited to what will fit in the grocery bag. On the day of the simulation they will bring the bags with them to carry through the inspection. Students will also be asked to dress in “immigrant” attire or their “Sunday best” for the inspection.

Guards: If students are guards, explain that they will help pin (with double-sided tape) each immigrant with a tag with their ship manifest number and direct student “immigrants” to proper places. Guards may wish to meet ahead of time to design official name tags/badges for themselves, and to create a standard ship manifest tags with a blank space for the numbers for the immigrants.

Public Health Service Doctor: Explain to students who will be playing the doctors that they will be observing the immigrant for visible signs of illness - i.e. an injured hand, spots on their faces, difficulty walking, etc. Although there was a medical inspection on Ellis Island after an initial visible inspection by doctors, for the purposes of this simulation, this will be the only medical

inspection done. Provide students with the list of chalk marks that doctors used to indicate health problems in immigrants. The doctors at Ellis Island would have marked on the immigrants' clothing with chalk; for the purposes of this activity, explain to students that they will make a mark on the manifest tag of the immigrant(s) whom they determine to have a visible health problem that would prevent them from admission to the United States.

**Process/Day of Simulation:** Immigrants will be ushered in groups to stand in line and have their ship manifest tag number pinned on them by the guard. Then guards can direct them to stand in line before the inspectors' desks to answer the questions. Before they go to answer the Inspectors' questions, they should pass in front of the doctors for a brief visual examination. Several will be held aside (as the teacher you can help decide) as a result of their interviews/medical exam. After the interviews are complete, most "immigrants" will be allowed to enter the United States. Those who were detained could be asked further questions, or asked to perform mental tasks/puzzles. Some who do not meet the criteria will be detained for exclusion; the rest will be allowed to enter.

**Debriefing:** For homework, ask students to write a one-page journal entry of their experience, in the role they played, in the immigration process simulation. Follow up with discussion of experiences. Some questions to ask students:

- *Compare and contrast how the people working felt versus the immigrant. How do you account for these differences?*
- *What were some reasons that immigrants were detained? Was this a good reason? Why or why not? How does the detention reflect on the US policy towards immigration at the time?*
- *What words would you use to describe the immigrant inspection process? How does this relate to working in a factory in America in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century?*

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR  
IMMIGRATION SERVICE

SALOON, CABIN, AND STEERAGE ALIENS MUST BE COMPLETELY MANIFESTED

THIS SHEET IS FOR STEERAGE PASSENGERS.

Page

## LIST OF MANIFEST OF ALIEN PASSENGERS FOR THE UNITED STATES IMMIGRATION OFFICER AT PORT OF ARRIVAL.

Required by the regulations of the Secretary of Commerce and Labor of the United States, under act of Congress approved February 20, 1907 to be delivered to the United States Immigration Officer by the Commanding Officer of any vessel having such passengers on board upon arrival at a port in the United States

S.S.

sailing from

19

Arriving at Port of

19

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	Information Required by Naturalization Act of June 21, 1906												
																								25	26	27	28									
No. on List	Name in Full Family Given	Age	Sex	Married Single	Occupation	Read Write	Nationality	Race	Country	City / Town	Name & complete address of nearest relative or friend in country of birth or last residence	State	City or Town	Whether having a license to make that destination	By whom was passage paid?	Whether in possession of \$50.	Where over in U.S. taken	Whether going to join a relative or friend, if so, list name & complete address	Ever in prison, institution for care of the insane or insanity, or other charge, if so, list name & complete address	Whether a Polygamist	Whether an American	Whether coming with offer, promise, or agreement of labor?	Condition of Health	Deformed or Crippled	Feet	Height	Complexion	Color of Eyes	Mark of Face	Identification	Country	Place of Birth				
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TOTAL P.02

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Augusta, NJ 07822[education@saveellisisland.org](mailto:education@saveellisisland.org) - 201-332-8485

X	Suspected mental defect	F	Face	P	Physical and Lungs
⊗	Definite signs of mental disease observed	Ft	Feet	Pj	Pregnancy
B	Back	G	Goiter	Sc	Scalp (Favus)
C	Conjunctivitis	H	Heart	S	Senility
CT	Trachoma	K	Hernia		
E	Eyes	L	Lameness		
		N	Neck		



## Immigrant Role Play Cards

**Immigrant Profile: Name\_Abraham Litkyevich\_  
Ship Manifest Number: 59**

**Country of Origin: Russia**

**Religion: Jewish**

**Age: 36, 6' 1" tall, 210 pounds**

**Married Man with wife and 2 children ages 8 and 10**

**One child has lingering cough from cold caught during passage on ship**

**Occupation: Mason/Bricklayer**

**Nationality: Ukrainian**

**Race: language – Ukrainian and Yiddish**

**Literate – can read some Hebrew, can't write**

**Destination: Paterson, New Jersey, has tickets for entire family**

**Cash: \$43.00**

**Joining brother and his family, will work in his brother's shop**

**Immigrant Profile: Name\_Sonia Litkyevich\_  
Ship Manifest Number: 60**

**Country of Origin: Russia**

**Religion: Jewish**

**Age: 32, 5' 3" tall, 130 pounds**

**Married with 2 children ages 8 and 10**

**One child has lingering cough from cold caught during passage on ship**

**Occupation: domestic**

**Nationality: Ukrainian**

**Race: language – Ukrainian and Yiddish**

**Literate – can read some Hebrew, can't write**

**Destination: Paterson, New Jersey,**

**Cash: husband has \$43.00**

**Joining brother-in-law and his family**

**Immigrant Profile: Name\_Natalia Litkyevich\_  
Ship Manifest Number: 61**

**Country of Origin: Russia**

**Religion: Jewish**

**Age: 8 has lingering cough from cold caught during passage on ship**

**Occupation: -----**

**Nationality: Ukrainian**

**Race: language – Ukrainian and Yiddish**

**Literate – no**

**Destination: Paterson, New Jersey**

**Cash: father has \$43.00**

**Immigrant Profile: Name\_Vladimir Litkyevich\_  
Ship Manifest Number: 62**

**Country of Origin: Russia**

**Religion: Jewish**

**Age: 10 his sister has lingering cough from cold caught during passage on ship**

**Occupation: -----**

**Nationality: Ukrainian**

**Race: language – Ukrainian and Yiddish**

**Literate – can read and write some Hebrew**

**Destination: Paterson, New Jersey**

**Cash: father has \$43.00**

**Immigrant Profile: Name - Sylvia Berlussa  
Ship Manifest Number: 63**

**Country of Origin: Italy**

**Religion: Roman Catholic**

**Age: 16, 5'4" tall, 115 pounds**

**Young woman**

**Occupation: seamstress**

**Nationality: Italian**

**Race: language – Italian**

**Literate – no**

**Destination: Newark New Jersey, is being met by uncle**

**Cash: \$58.**

**Joining uncle and his family, planning to look for work**

**Immigrant Profile: Name**\_\_Viktor Rozanski\_\_  
**Ship Manifest Number:** 64

**Country of Origin:** Russia  
**Religion:** Roman Catholic  
**Age:** 52 5' 8" tall, 150 pounds  
**Married Man** - family still in Poland  
**Occupation:** laborer - unskilled  
**Nationality:** Polish  
**Race:** language – Polish  
**Literate** – no  
**Destination:** Corning, NY has tickets  
**Cash:** \$75.00      **Friend lives in Corning, planning to look for work**

**Immigrant Profile: Name**\_\_Siggi Vlimzig\_\_  
**Ship Manifest Number:** 65

**Country of Origin:** Russia  
**Religion:** Jewish  
**Age:** 24 6' tall, 180 pounds  
**Single Man;** walks with a very visible limp/drag foot  
**Occupation:** baker, willing to learn factory work  
**Nationality:** Russian  
**Race:** language – Russian, Hebrew and Yiddish  
**Literate** – can read and write Hebrew  
**Destination:** New York, NY does not have ticket yet  
**Cash:** \$60.  
**Has name and address of family friend in NY, planning to look for work**

**Immigrant Profile: Name**\_\_Helga Krautzmänn\_\_  
**Ship Manifest Number:** 66

**Country of Origin:** Germany  
**Religion:** Lutheran  
**Age:** 30 5'3" tall, 140 pounds  
**Single woman**  
**Occupation:** cook  
**Nationality:** German  
**Literate** – can read the Bible and write a little  
**Destination:** Newark, NJ – has ticket, is being met by brother-in law  
**Cash:** \$52.00  
**Joining her sister and her sister's family to cook and help care for nieces and nephews**



**Immigrant Profile: Name\_\_Simon Putminsk\_\_**  
**Ship Manifest Number: 67**

**Country of Origin: Russia**  
**Religion: Jewish**  
**Age: 15 5' 5" tall, 120 pounds**  
**Single man; one hand and arm are paralyzed**  
**Occupation: unskilled, can sing**  
**Nationality: Polish**  
**Literate – No**  
**Destination: Jersey City, NJ, does not have ticket yet**  
**Cash: \$40.00**  
**Joining friend, planning to look for work**

**Immigrant Profile: Name\_\_Francisco Vuelho\_\_**  
**Ship Manifest Number: 68**

**Country of Origin: Portugal**  
**Religion: Roman Catholic**  
**Age: 27 5'11" tall, 165 pounds**  
**Married man with wife**  
**Occupation: builds and repairs ships**  
**Nationality: Portuguese**  
**Literate – can read, can't write**  
**Destination: Fall River, MA, has tickets**  
**Cash: \$64.**  
**Joining several cousins and their families, planning to look for work**

**Immigrant Profile: Name\_\_Irene Vuelho\_\_**  
**Ship Manifest Number: 69**

**Country of Origin: Portugal**  
**Religion: Roman Catholic**  
**Age: 22 5' 5" tall, 140 pounds**  
**Married; has red spots on face and hands, feels feverish after voyage**  
**Occupation: domestic**  
**Nationality: Portuguese**  
**Literate – no**  
**Destination: Fall River, MA, has tickets**  
**Cash: \$34.**  
**Joining several cousins and their families, planning to look for work**

**Immigrant Profile: Name\_\_Stefania Ceaucesceau\_\_**  
**Ship Manifest Number: 70**

**Country of Origin: Romania**  
**Religion: Roman Catholic**  
**Age: 54 5'6" tall, 170pounds**  
**Married woman; is having trouble catching her breath, wheezing**  
**Occupation: housewife**  
**Nationality: Romanian**  
**Literate – No**  
**Destination: Bayonne, NJ – has ticket**  
**Cash: \$52.00**  
**Joining her husband, hoping to find work as cleaning woman**

**Immigrant Profile: Name\_\_Kelly Dougherty\_\_\_\_\_**  
**Ship Manifest Number: 81**

**Country of Origin: Ireland**  
**Religion: Roman Catholic**  
**Age: 17 5'4" tall, 125 pounds**  
**Single woman**  
**Occupation: farming, housekeeper**  
**Nationality: Irish**  
**Literate – can read, can't write**  
**Destination: Jersey City, NJ- no ticket**  
**Cash: \$50.**  
**Joining family friend, planning to look for household work**

## **For Inspectors: Process for admitting immigrants**

- 1) Write down on manifest sheet in Column 13 the tag number that is pinned to the immigrant.
- 2) Ask the following questions and put answers on manifest in appropriate boxes.
  1. What is your full name? (family name =last name; given name = first name)
  2. What is your age in months and years?
  3. Record gender in box.
  4. Are you married or single?
  5. What is your occupation?
  6. Are you able to read and write? (you may ask them of proof that they can)
  7. What is your country of origin/nationality?
  8. What race or people are you part of?
  9. Where was your last permanent residence (country and city)?
  10. What is the name and complete address of nearest relative or friend in country?
  11. What is your final destination (intended residence – state and city or town)
  12. Do you have a ticket to that destination?
  13. By whom was passage paid? (self, other person, corporation or business, government)
  14. Do you have in your possession \$50. – if not, how much?
  15. Have you ever been in the US before? When and for how long, and where?
  16. Are you joining a relative or friend, if so, where? What is their complete name and address?
  17. Have you ever been supported by a charity/been in prison/been in a poorhouse? (*If yes, note which*)
  18. Are you a polygamist?
  19. Are you an anarchist?
  20. Are you coming to America with an offer, promise or agreement of work?
  21. Note: their general health condition- do they have any difficulty physically? Any unusual characteristics and send them for further inspection if unsure.
  22. What is your height in feet and inches?
  23. Describe their complexion – light, medium, dark
  24. Note their eye and hair color.
  25. Note any marks of distinction that you can see on face, hands, etc.
  26. What is your place of birth? (*city/town, country*)